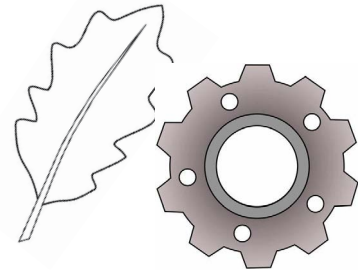




Art From Found Materials

Level: Elementary



Background

What do you think of when you think of Art? If you're like most people, you probably think of paintings or pottery-but art can be much more than that!

On display through December, 2020, at the Alaska State Museum, is the *Women of Vision* exhibit. This show features art created by women of Alaska over the past 120 years. Each of these women share their unique vision in their color choices, the thoughts they express, and the unique materials they use to create their art.

Examine each piece of art in the *Women of Vision* show, or look at the online exhibit and go on a visual scavenger hunt.

What makes each piece of art unique? How is the artist expressing their vision in a way that is new, and different from what has been done in the past? What surprised you?

The artists whose works are in the *Women of Vision* exhibit show us that art can be many different things.

What is your unique artistic vision?

Summary

Go on a Visual Scavenger Hunt of the Alaska State Museum art exhibit, *Women of Vision*. Notice the non-traditional materials you see, then create your own piece of art using materials you find around your house or yard.

Estimated Time

Approximately 45 minutes.

Materials Needed

- A variety of small "found" objects-leaves, springs, gears, small toys, etc.
- A base to glue your things to- either a piece of cardboard or paper, or a board or large rock
- white glue (for light stuff), or a glue gun (for heavier things)

Mixed Metaphor, Sheila Wyne, 2004
Purchased with support of the Rasmuson Foundation
Alaska State Museum 2004-18-3



Wanting, Carol Lee Hilgemann, 2003
Alaska State Museum 2003-11-1



A Visual Scavenger Hunt

Examine the art in Women of Vision. Read the exhibit labels for help.

Can you find a piece of art that is:

- _____Made of fish skin
- _____Made by many people working together
- _____Made of a walrus stomach
- _____Made of a metal drill bit and a vertebrae
- _____Has iguana skin on it
- _____Something you could wear
- _____Has porcupine quills in it
- _____Could be used to hunt seals
- _____Made of things you could find around a house
- _____Contains metal gears
- _____Painted only of shades of yellow, red, black and white (the “Zorn” palette)
- _____A beaded version of something you could eat
- _____Has fur on it
- _____A photograph
- _____More than 100 years old.
- _____Made entirely of straight lines

Create a Piece of Found Art

Many of the pieces in the Women of Vision show are made of “Found Art”—non-traditional materials found around the house or outside, which are put together in new and unexpected ways. The items aren’t disguised or changed and they still look like themselves, but when they are combined together, the different items create a new and unique idea.

You can create your own piece of Found Art, from materials gathered from around your house or in your yard.

Step 1: Collect.

Go for a walk around your house or in your yard and collect things you find (making sure not to take anything that belongs to someone else.)

Assessment

Does your piece of Found Art express the vision you had? Does it share your idea? If yes- then success!

You could collect things like gears, small toys, leaves, sticks, cool rocks, small parts of engines, springs, thread spools, scraps of fabric, or buttons. Found Art can be made from things of any size—some people even make art from whole cars! But it’s easiest if you start with small things.

Step 2: Think.

Lay out all your findings and look at them. Decide if you want to make a flat or an upright piece of art. What will you use for a base? A piece of paper or cardboard works well for a flat piece of art. An upright piece needs something sturdier, like a board or a large flat rock.

Step 3: Plan.

Some people have an idea in their head of the vision they want to create, before they ever start building. Others need to spend some time moving pieces around, rearranging them and trying different layouts until they figure out what looks right to them. Both methods work.

Step 4: Glue.

Once you have your plan, start gluing your pieces together. You can use white glue for small things, but heavier things may need a hot glue gun. If you are doing several layers, remember that the things you put on first might get covered up later on.

Step 5: Enjoy.

When you have glued everything and your vision is expressed just the way you want it, stop. Give your piece a name, and display with pride your own unique piece of Found Art.



Ooger-uk Inua #3, Walrus spirit, Larry Beck, 1982.
Gift of Rasmuson Foundation.
Alaska State Museum 2005-35-1

Explore-What else can you do?

- Explore the rest of Alaska State Museum. What other Found Art can you find?
- Experiment with Ephemeral Art. A special kind of Found Art is called Ephemeral Art. "Ephemeral Art" means it only stays for a short time. In some Ephemeral Art, found materials such as leaves and stones are arranged together outdoors in nature without glue. Eventually, the weather makes it disappear. You can see examples of Ephemeral Art at this link: <https://www.boredart.com/2015/06/what-is-ephemeral-art-read-to-know-more.html>
- Websites on creating Found Art:
<https://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Make-a-Found-Art-Sculpture/>
<https://tinkerlab.com/found-object-art-junk-critters/>
- Books on Found Art:
Beautiful Stuff! : Learning With Found Materials
by Cathy Weisman Topal and Lella Gandini

Hand To Earth

by Andy Goldsworthy

Alaska Arts Standards

In this activity, students will focus on: **Create**

- **Anchor Standard #3:** Produce artistic work.



Found Art with objects found in nature,
Art and photo by Jim Gilbert

